

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A coated chewing gum product with absorption acceleration of a medicament, comprising:

- 5                   a) a chewing gum center comprising a gum base, a flavor, and a bulking/sweetening agent;
- b) a chewing gum coating comprising a polyol selected from the group consisting of xylitol and sorbitol, and containing at least one medicament; and
- 10                   c) a bicarbonate salt incorporated into the chewing gum center, the coating, or both.

2. The coated chewing gum product of claim 1 wherein the bicarbonate salt comprises from about 0.1% to about 1% by weight of the chewing gum product.

15           3. The coated chewing gum product of claim 1 wherein said bicarbonate salt is sodium bicarbonate.

4. The coated chewing gum product of claim 3 wherein the amount of said sodium bicarbonate ranges from 0.2% to 0.7% by weight of the chewing gum product.

20           5. The coated chewing gum product of claim 3 wherein said sodium bicarbonate is in the chewing gum center.

6. The coated chewing gum product of claim 3 wherein said sodium bicarbonate is present in the coating.

25           7. The coated chewing gum product of claim 3 wherein said sodium bicarbonate is present in both the chewing gum center and the coating.

8. The coated chewing gum product of claim 1 wherein said bulking/sweetening agent comprises a high-intensity sweetener selected from the group consisting of aspartame, alitame, salts of acesulfame, cyclamate and its salts, saccharine and its salts, neotame, thaumatin, monellin, dihydrochalcones, sucralose and combinations thereof.

9. The coated chewing gum product of claim 1 wherein said gum center further comprises a cooling agent.

10. The coated chewing gum product of claim 1 wherein said gum center further comprises a plasticizing agent.

11. The coated chewing gum product of claim 1 wherein said coating comprises at least one flavor.

12. The coated chewing gum product of claim 1 wherein said medicament comprises an orally administrable medicament selected from a group consisting of stimulants, vitamins, minerals, herbal supplements, nutraceuticals, nicotine, nicotine replacement agents, antacids, analgesics and combinations thereof.

13. The chewing gum product of claim 1 wherein said medicament comprises an orally administrable medicament selected from the group consisting of tranquilizers, cardiovascular agents, cancer therapeutics, anitmycotics, oral contraceptives, muscle relaxants, antihistamines, decongestants, antibacterial agents, anesthetics, antitussives, diuretics, anti-inflammatories, HIV medications, AIDS medications, neurological drugs, antivirals, psychotherapeutic agents, anti-diabetic agents and combinations thereof.

14. The coated chewing gum product of claim 1 wherein said chewing gum coating comprises xylitol and the bicarbonate salt comprises sodium bicarbonate incorporated into the chewing gum center.

15. The coated chewing gum product of claim 1 wherein said chewing gum coating comprises sorbitol and the bicarbonate salt comprises sodium bicarbonate incorporated into the chewing gum center.

5 16. A coated chewing gum product including a medicament comprising:

- a) a chewing gum center;
  - b) a chewing gum coating containing at least one medicament; and
  - c) a water-soluble alkaline material incorporated into the
- 10 chewing gum center, the coating, or both.

17. The coated chewing gum product of claim 16 wherein said water-soluble alkaline material comprises sodium bicarbonate.

18. The coated chewing gum product of claim 17 wherein the amount of said sodium bicarbonate ranges from 0.1% to 1% by weight of the entire product.

19. The coated chewing gum product of claim 16 wherein said water-soluble alkaline material is in the chewing gum center.

20. The coated chewing gum product of claim 16 wherein said water-soluble alkaline material is present in the coating.

20 21. The coated chewing gum product of claim 16 wherein said water-soluble alkaline material is present in both the chewing gum center and the coating.

25 22. The coated chewing gum product of claim 16 wherein said chewing gum center comprises a high-intensity sweetener selected from the group consisting of aspartame, alitame, salts of acesulfame, cyclamate and its salts, saccharine and its salts, neotame, thaumatin, monellin, dihydrochalcones, sucralose and combinations thereof.

23. The coated chewing gum product of claim 16 wherein said coating comprises a polyol.

24. The coated chewing gum product of claim 23 wherein said polyol is selected from the group consisting of sorbitol and xylitol.

25. The coated chewing gum product of claim 16 wherein said coating comprises least one flavor.

26. The chewing gum product of claim 16 wherein said medicament comprises an orally administrable medicament selected from a group consisting of stimulants, vitamins, minerals, herbal supplements, nutraceuticals, nicotine, nicotine replacement agents, antacids, analgesics and combinations thereof.

27. The chewing gum product of claim 16 wherein said medicament comprises an orally administrable medicament selected from the group consisting of tranquilizers, cardiovascular agents, cancer therapeutics, anitmycotics, oral contraceptives, muscle relaxants, antihistamines, decongestants, antibacterial agents, anesthetics, antitussives, diuretics, anti-inflammatories, HIV medications, AIDS medications, neurological drugs, antivirals, psychotherapeutic agents, anti-diabetic agents and combinations thereof.

28. The coated chewing gum product of claim 16 wherein said medicament comprises an encapsulated medicament.

29. The coated chewing gum product of claim 16 wherein said medicament comprises caffeine.

30. A method of delivering a medicament with accelerated absorption through the oral mucosa comprising the steps of:

a) providing a chewing gum center;

b) coating the chewing gum center with a coating comprising a polyol selected from the group consisting of xylitol and sorbitol, and containing at least one medicament;

c) either the chewing gum center, the coating, or both incorporating a bicarbonate salt; and

d) causing an individual in need of the medicament to chew the product.

31. The method of claim 30 wherein said bicarbonate salt is sodium bicarbonate.

32. The method of claim 31 wherein the amount of said sodium bicarbonate ranges from 0.1% to 1% by weight of the chewing gum product.

33. The method of claim 30 wherein said medicament comprises an orally administrable medicament selected chosen from a group consisting of stimulants, vitamins, minerals, herbal supplements, nutraceuticals, nicotine, nicotine replacement agents, antacids, analgesics and combinations thereof.

34. The method of claim 30 wherein said medicament comprises an orally administrable medicament selected from the group consisting of tranquilizers, cardiovascular agents, cancer therapeutics, anitmycotics, oral contraceptives, muscle relaxants, antihistamines, decongestants, antibacterial agents, anesthetics, antitussives, diuretics, anti-inflammatories, HIV medications, AIDS medications, neurological drugs, antivirals, psychotherapeutic agents, anti-diabetic agents and combinations thereof.

35. The method of claim 30 wherein said medicament comprises an encapsulated medicament.

36. The method of claim 30 wherein said medicament comprises caffeine.

37. The method of claim 30 wherein the medicament is delivered at a rate greater than 30% more than the rate that the medicament would have been delivered if the bicarbonate salt were not present.

38. A coated chewing gum product with absorption acceleration of caffeine, comprising:

- a) a chewing gum center comprising a gum base, a flavor, and a bulking/sweetening agent; and
- b) a chewing gum coating comprising caffeine and a polyol selected from the group consisting of sorbitol and xylitol.

39. The coated chewing gum product of claim 38 wherein the product further comprises a water-soluble alkaline material incorporated into the chewing gum center, the coating, or both.